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BOOK REVIEWS

Public School Administration. By ELLWOOD P. CUBBERLEY. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916. Pp. xviii+479. \$1.75.

This book is one of a series of three, the other two of which are to appear soon. It deals with the organization and administration of a school system, while the other two are to be concerned with the administration of a school and with classroom teaching, respectively. In other words, the present volume is especially concerned with the work of the city superintendent, while the other two will treat particularly of the work of the school principal and of the classroom teacher, respectively.

One is likely to feel, after a superficial examination of the present book, that the author has attempted too much. The subjects, or, perhaps, the phases of the subject, are so numerous that one wishes that the author had confined himself to a narrower field. As one follows the book through carefully, however, one is gradually convinced that the author has sensed the needs and the possibilities of our public-school system; that he not only has large vision, but that he has served his apprenticeship and knows the system as no one does who has not come into intimate contact with its problems; and that he is able in one volume to treat helpfully, if not as elaborately as one might wish, the whole field that he has chosen. The knowledge of the large city school systems of the country gained through his connection with various school surveys is undoubtedly a valuable asset to the author in the production of a work like the present book.

The book is composed of three parts. Part I is devoted to a brief survey of the historical development of schools and school systems. Part II, which is the main body of the book, is entitled "The City School District and Its Problems." Under this head the author discusses the selection and the work of school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers, the training and salary of teachers, the construction of curricula and the adaptation of the subject-matter of instruction to the various social groups and individual needs, scientific measurement in education, school health and attendance, clerical work, school funds, auxiliary-education agencies, and school records and reports.

The author has, as he remarks in his preface, sought to avoid a colorless amassing of facts, as well as a collection of confusing and contradictory opinions. He has not hesitated to give the stamp of his approval and the weight of his conviction on all of the large questions of school policy.

The chapters dealing with the organization and functions of school boards and the selection of the city superintendent, his training, personal qualifications, duties, and opportunities as an organizer, manager, and supervisor are

especially illuminating and thoroughgoing. The author advocates, for the school system, independence of the other branches of city government. He would have as school-board members successful men of wide experience in big business organizations. These men should be chosen, not by wards, as has been too often done, but by the city at large, to represent the whole city. The board should be comparatively small. The school board, after determining the large policies, should leave the carrying out of their wishes to experts in each particular field.

The superintendent must be a man in whom the board has confidence. When once he has been chosen, the board should allow him much freedom in directing the school system. The board should be essentially a legislative body and should leave to the superintendent, the educational expert, the task of devising means of carrying out their general policies, with the financial and moral support of the board.

The superintendent should be not only an educational expert. The academic and professional training and school experience here prescribed are very nearly that which the better superintendents of the country have approximated. But beyond this the author writes in some detail of the personal characteristics which are essential to a good superintendent. His personal contacts are more numerous and more varied than those of any other school officer, and it is certainly essential that he know how to deal with me—to conciliate, to lead, and to inspire.

Part III represents an attempt to apply the administrative experience of cities to county and state school systems. The state, as well as the smaller units of administration, says the author, has much to learn from the cities, both in the matter of more centralization of control and support and in the eradication of bad politics from school affairs.

Those familiar with Mr. Cubberley's earlier works will find few new ideas in the present volume. The book is decidedly worth while, however, in bringing together in one volume so comprehensive a treatment of the various phases of school administration. It will be of interest primarily to school boards and administrative officers and college teachers of school administration, but there is no one connected with the school system in any capacity, in the reviewer's opinion, who will not find some parts of the book interesting and helpful.

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Prevocational Education in the Public Schools. By FRANK M. LEAVITT and EDITH BROWN. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915. Pp. v + 245. \$1.10.

"It is the purpose of this book to present in detail some of the school subjects, setting forth the methods which have been found to be measurably